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### BRICK ARCHITECTURE OF HOLLAND.

THE architecture of Holland is, in general, dismissed by the histories with scant attention, and with the remark that the Dutch have contributed nothing to the art, that they have merely been borrowers from other countries. To a certain extent the reproach is deserved. Holland has indeed taken her architectural styles ready-made, as America has, and for much the same reason, — namely, that at the period of race development when architectural styles were in process of formation the Dutch were not yet a homogeneous nation.

The Netherlands, it should be remembered, are a comparatively recent addition to the geography of Europe. If Belgium was originally an alluvial expanse formed by its rivers, Holland was simply a deposit of mud surrounded by water. Add to this an unpropitious soil and a rigorous climate, and one is tempted to agree with the proverb that this land was "not made for man, but for storks and beavers." In the time of Cæsar and Strabo it was merely a swampy forest, and adventurous travellers narrated that one might pass from tree to tree all over Holland without touching the ground. The Waal, the Meuse and the Scheldt yearly overflowed their banks, the water covering the flat country around to a great distance. Autumnal tempests annually submerged the island of Batavia, while in Holland the line of the coast changed

constantly. For centuries after the Germanic invasion Flanders was still called the "merciless and interminable forest." In 1197 the country about Waes, now a garden, had remained untilled, and the monks who inhabited it were besieged by wolves. As late as the fourteenth century droves of wild horses roamed through the forests. The sea then encroached on what is now dry land. Ghent was a seaport in the ninth century, Throust, St. Omer and Bruges in the twelfth century, Damme in the thirteenth and Ecloo in the fourteenth. The Holland shown in the old maps is now unrecognizable.

So, while the dwellers in other parts of Europe were becoming nationalized, learning the arts of peace and civilization and preparing to receive the re-discovered learning of antiquity, the settlers of Holland were battling with the elements to obtain mere dry land enough on which to base habitations which should shelter them from the rain and wind. They had little leisure to practise the art of architecture. The few stone buildings that they did erect in this early time (and which so suffered later under the fanatical destruction of the "Image-breakers") were in the Gothic style, and were probably designed by German architects.

It is not till the beginning of the sixteenth century that Holland can be said to have any architecture in the larger sense; and the cause of the impulse





PLATE XVIII

THE "SLAUGHTER-HOUSE," HAARLEM



then given to building illustrates strikingly the poverty of the precedent work. This cause was the publication of an edict by the Emperor Maximilian, afterward renewed by his successor, Charles the Fifth, in which it was decreed that, as the buildings in the cities of Holland were, excepting the gates and a few scattered structures, such as those in the Gothic style just referred to, entirely of wood, and as, in consequence, devastating conflagrations periodically ravaged the main quarters of the towns, it was ordered that the burghers tear down the old edifices and rebuild their cities anew in brick. For this exigency the nation was taken entirely unprepared; she had no architects of her own; a ready-made style must be imported and at once. In these straits she naturally turned to her masters, the Spaniards, whom she had not yet learned to abhor; and, borrowing her new architectural principles from them, built thenceforth in a style based upon that of the Spanish Renaissance.

Though, therefore, the Dutch have developed no indigenous style in architecture, we need not attribute this failure to any lack of national artistic endowment, but can satisfactorily account for it through the lateness of a national development retarded by natural environment.

But, in borrowing the main features of her new buildings from the Spaniards, Holland adapted them to the exigencies of her climate, and modified them by ideas received from neighboring Germany and by a natural racial predilection, both in decoration and composition, for the picturesque at the expense of the symmetrical. Roofs were lengthened and shot up to immoderate heights, openings were multiplied and windows enlarged (for in this climate neither light nor heat were to be feared), the love of the German picturesque sky-line, broken by stepped gables and lofty dormers, appeared; and yet, in spite of the transformation to which it was subjected, the altered style still smacked of its origin;—indeed, after three centuries there can be no doubt of whence it sprung, and, on a fine sunny day in certain quarters of the

city of modern Amsterdam, the traveler might almost fancy himself in Spain.

After the expulsion of the Spaniards in 1579 the style continued, and during this very prosperous period and all the early part of the seventeenth century the land was filled with picturesque and highly colored edifices. Left to themselves the work of the Dutch architects became more fantastic; lines warped, pinnacles sprung out in the most unexpected places, and oriental fantasies were imported. Campaniles of the most strange and yet not ungraceful shapes sprung up, ornamented with columns which bore nothing, niches which lacked statues, with Italian balustrades, African obelisks and Muscovite domes,—in short with a mixture of all styles and all times, the whole surmounted by a weathercock or an imperial crown. And yet these curious agglomerations are, in a certain sense, elegant in design,—as charming as they are bizarre. Their builders, skilful colorists that they were, knew far better than to cover them with lead or copper, for tints of gray or gray-green would have been lost against the silver sky, but painted them intensely black; and this sombre color, sharply cut against the clouds, added still further to the frail elegance of this cosmopolitan architecture.

The effect produced by these aerial eccentricities was considered so charming that the architects were unwilling to stop with them. Soon the bases of these campaniles were built after the same model. All the rules of architecture, ancient or modern, were violated at will,—a subversion of architectural laws and logic to make Vasari, Alberti, Palladio and Scamozzi groan in their graves at the violation of all the principles which they had so lovingly elaborated. And yet, nevertheless, thanks to color, thanks to a misty atmosphere that softens too startling outlines, these slender towers have an indisputable charm which prevents the critic from too strongly condemning the voluntarily committed faults of the eccentric architects; and it is incontestable that at this period, when such liberties were taken by Dutch architects with an exotic style, the brick





PLATE XIX

WATER-GATE IN THE CITY WALL, SNEEK



architecture of Holland furnishes its most interesting and characteristic examples.

The "Slaughter-house" at Haarlem, shown in the accompanying plate, was built in 1603; the Water-gate in the city wall at Sneek, called the "Hoogelandster Waterpoort," in 1613; the City Hall at Hoorn in 1613, though here the main door was restored in 1652. The gable of the arched passage-way to the church at Nijmegen, called the "Kerkboog," bears the date 1605. The Weighing-house at Deventer, the ancient repository of weights and measures, was originally built in 1528, but was restored and altered in 1620. The main structure of the Harbor-tower at Hoorn was built in 1532, but the gable was rebuilt and the tower erected in 1651.

To this style another succeeded, which, to characterize it briefly, seemed to take for an object a quality which had formerly been studiously neglected,—symmetrical design. Without completely breaking with tradition, architecture began to show a reverence for classicism which contrasted sharply with preceding work. But this new style was short lived and unfruitful; the modern era almost immediately succeeded, and the imported precepts of Mansart and Perrault commenced their fatal reign over the architects of Holland.

If, then, the architecture of Holland at its best is but the engrafting of extraneous ornament upon a borrowed style, let us inquire if it possesses any distinguishing qualities which we may really call indigenous and national.

Amsterdam has been called the "Venice of the North," and the comparison, curiously enough, renders still more salient two characteristics which pertain to the best of Venetian and of Dutch architecture,—first, a carelessness for the laws of statics, and second, a love for color. These two qualities we may take as most characteristic of the architecture of Holland.

The Venetian architects have been blamed for superimposing "the full on the empty," for supporting solid walls of masonry on open arches and colonnades. The architects of Holland were

doubly sinners in this respect. They pierced walls with windows wherever they conceived them to be necessary without in the least troubling themselves as to what might be above them; they repeatedly placed the full on the empty; and when their edifice was complete they crowned it with an enormous entablature ornamented with festoons, arches, and heavy carvings, and took care to light-paint the whole that they might make its apparent size the greater, and its apparent weight the more considerable. The resulting effect of instability is rendered more striking by the fact that half of the old houses are doubly out of the perpendicular. Not only do they lean forward and overhang the street, but their side-walls, set at an angle to the façades, form a shape to which no word in architectural terminology will apply—a lopsidedness due mainly to the settling of the piles on which they are constructed, for every town and village in Friesland is built on such artificial foundations, and Erasmus of Rotterdam said that he knew a city (Amsterdam) whose inhabitants "dwelt on the tops of trees, like rooks."

And, finally, as to color, all buildings, public or private, in Holland are so rich in it as to almost dazzle the traveler from more sad-colored lands. The materials used lend themselves admirably to this end, the Belgian granite of the foundations, the yellowish Maestricht sand-stone of the trimmings and cornices, and the warm red and brown tones of the brick walls. To these potent base-tones,—blue-gray, cream-color and red,—wooden window-frames painted straw-color, and an enormous entablature, also straw-color, surmounting the façade and sharply outlined against the red or black tiles of the roof, are added. The granite base is sometimes, though rarely, lacking, as are the trimmings; but the light-painted wood-work and the deep-toned brick never. To render these contrasts more intense, the house doors are painted a vivid green and the shutters white, while in the older buildings the panes themselves are of violet-colored glass. In a country where the misty atmosphere and the fog softens outlines



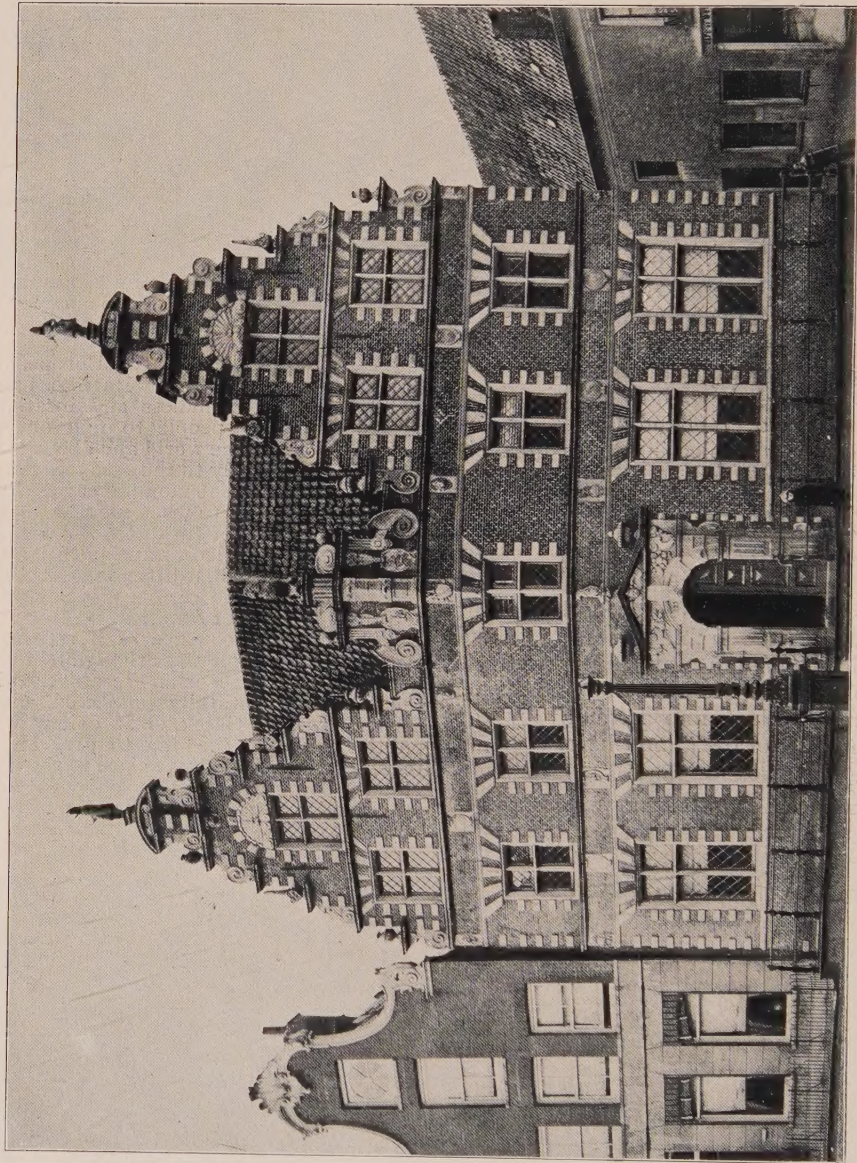




Armorial Mosaics  
from Santa Croce.

SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE









ARMS OF THE BERNARDI-TOMMASI FAMILY  
SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE

persons concerned in it were equally great, and this belief, fostered by the somewhat rhetorical literature of Rome, met the new consciousness of personality more than half-way, and led to that unlimited admiration for human genius and achievement which was so prominent a feature of the early Renaissance. . . .

"Unlimited admiration for genius, and wonder that the personalities of antiquity should have survived with their great names in no way diminished, soon had two consequences. One was love of glory, and the other the patronage of those arts which were supposed to hand down a glorious name undiminished to posterity. The glory of old Rome had come down through poets and historians, architects and sculptors, and the Italians, feeling that the same means might be used to hand down the achievements of their own time to as distant a posterity, made a new religion of glory, with poets and artists for priests."

Nowhere is this ardent desire of the period for the perpetuation of a name by means of some tangible memorial better exemplified than in the Florentine church of Santa Croce. This church contains no fewer than two hundred and seventy-six sepulchral stones, dating from the fourteenth century, not reckoning its beautiful and elaborate mural tombs, which include some of the finest in Italy.

Nor is Santa Croce's greatest claim to attention so much in the number or beauty as in the celebrity of the tombs it contains. Byron wrote of it in "Childe Harold":—

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie  
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is  
Even in itself an immortality,  
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,  
The particle of those sublimities  
Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose  
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his  
The starry Galileo, with his woes;  
Here Machiavelli's earth, returned to whence it rose.

The late Dean Stanley in his history of Westminster has drawn an interesting comparison between the English Abbey and Santa Croce, and incidentally pointed out some of the causes why the latter church came to contain what Madame de Staël has called, "*la plus brillante assemblée de morts qui soit en Europe.*"

"Of all the characteristics of Westminster Abbey," wrote the Dean, "that which most endears it to the nation and gives most force to its name—which has, more than anything else, made it the home of the people of England, the most venerated fabric of the English church—is not so much its glory as the seat of coronations, or as the sepulchre of the kings; not so much its school, or its monastery, or its chapter, or its sanctuary, as the fact that it is the resting-place of famous Englishmen from every rank and creed, and every form of mind and genius. It is not only Rheims Cathedral and St. Denys both in one; but it is also what the Pantheon was intended to be in France, what the Valhalla is to Germany, what Santa Croce is to Italy. . . . In the church of Santa Croce at Florence, as in Westminster Abbey, the present destination of the building was no part of the original design, but was the result of various converging causes. As the church of one of the two great preaching orders, it had a nave large beyond all proportion to its choir. That order being the Franciscan, bound by vows of poverty, the simplicity of the worship preserved the whole space clear from any adventitious ornaments. The popularity of the Franciscans, especially in a convent hallowed by a visit from Saint Francis himself, drew to it not only the chief civic festivals but also the numerous families who gave alms to the friars, and whose connection with their



ARMS OF ANDREA GUARDI

SANTA CROCE FLORENCE







church was for this reason in turn encouraged by them. In those graves, piled high with the standards and achievements of the noble families of Florence, were successively interred—not because of their eminence, but as members or friends of those families—some of the most illustrious personages of the fifteenth century. Thus it came to pass, as if by accident, that in the vault of the Buonarrotti was laid Michael Angelo; in the vault of the Viviani the preceptor of one of their house, Galileo. From these two burials the church gradually became the recognized shrine of Italian genius."

Of the great number of sepulchral stones of which the pavement of Santa Croce may be said to consist, some few originally bore carved figures of the dead, but the greater part of these effigies have been all but effaced by the feet of the devout. The slabs which were not carved, but in which inscriptions and armorial devices were inlaid in colored marbles, are, on the other hand, well preserved. A number of these devices are shown in the accompanying illustrations.

These heraldic shields all date from early in the fifteenth century, and, in addition to their decorative value, mark a very interesting transitional period in the history of heraldry. Still distinctly Gothic in their stiffness and conventionality (the lion, for example, is no lion "drawn from the quick," as one is described in a manuscript of a century later), the elaborate mantling, which was to become so beautiful a feature, here merely foreshadowed by the ornament surrounding the shield, there is



ARMS OF THE SERRISTORI FAMILY  
SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE

already to be observed that refining quality which is invariably the harbinger of Renaissance influence. S. F. N.

## Reliquaries from San Antonio, Padua.

THE principal church in Padua, and that most celebrated for its sanctity and the richest in works of art, is the church of San Antonio. The two beautiful reliquaries shown in the accompanying engravings are the gems of its treasury, which contains many elaborate pieces of goldsmiths' work. Though they date from early in the fifteenth century, they are among the most finished specimens of Renaissance craftsmanship; and indeed, during the Renaissance the goldsmith's art, with precocious maturity, outran all others, for, as says Taine, it found "at its very first step complete models in the relics of Greece and Rome, and at the same time complete instruments in the founder's furnace and the mason's mallet, whilst painting, poorly guided and poorly provided, had to wait until the slow progress of centuries should free perfect corporeal forms from the disturbed visions of the middle ages, until a revival of geometrical studies could teach perspective, and until the educated eye and professional experiments could introduce the use of oil and gradations of color."

The reliquaries here shown are supposed to contain bits of the skin, tongue and chin of Anthony, patron saint of Padua, who



ARMS OF FRANCESCO CILIANOCO  
SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE





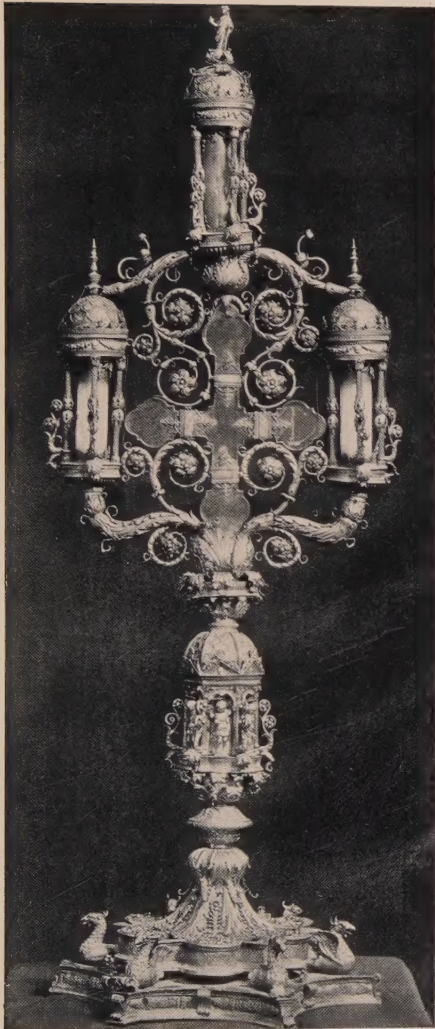
PLATE XXIII

THE "WEIGHING-HOUSE," DEVENTER



other, their heads above water, their eyes upon the preacher, who exhorted them that they should ever praise and magnify their Creator. And at his words the fishes seemed agitated, flapped their tails, opened their mouths, and testified in a thousand ways their homage and the tribute of their mute praise. Then the multitude on the shore could not restrain their admiration, and some of them were overcome with shame and would have cast themselves into the waves, and some were affrighted and would have fled; but all were astonished beyond measure at the miracle that they had seen with their eyes, and cried out with one voice. And Saint Anthony, turning round upon them, exclaimed: 'Let the fishes of the sea teach man to praise the Lord! Shall man, the image of his Maker, alone be mute in His praise?' Then the heretics were confounded, and fell at the preacher's feet, and would not rise till he had given them absolution.

'And it is recorded that no fewer than an hundred repented them of their sins because of this wonder that the Lord had wrought at the hands of His servant, Anthony.'



RELIQUARY IN THE CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, PADUA  
MADE BY ALLESANDRO DA PARMA

addressed himself to fishes as Saint Francis did to birds. As the legend concerning him is as unfamiliar as it is curious, we may be pardoned for quoting it here.

"When," says the old chronicler, "Saint Anthony of Padua was preaching at Rimini, he found the eyes of many obstinately closed to the words of light, and said from his chair: 'Let those who list follow me to the seashore.' And having come to the seashore he raised his voice and cried aloud: 'Ye fishes of the sea, hear; for man, the image of his Maker, is like the deaf adder, and refuses to harken!' Instantly, from the depths of the sea, shoals of both little and great fishes thronged to the shore. From all sides they came in countless numbers, crowding thick upon each



RELIQUARY IN THE CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, PADUA  
MADE BY AGNOSTINO DA PADOVA





PLATE XXIV

HARBOR TOWER, HOORN







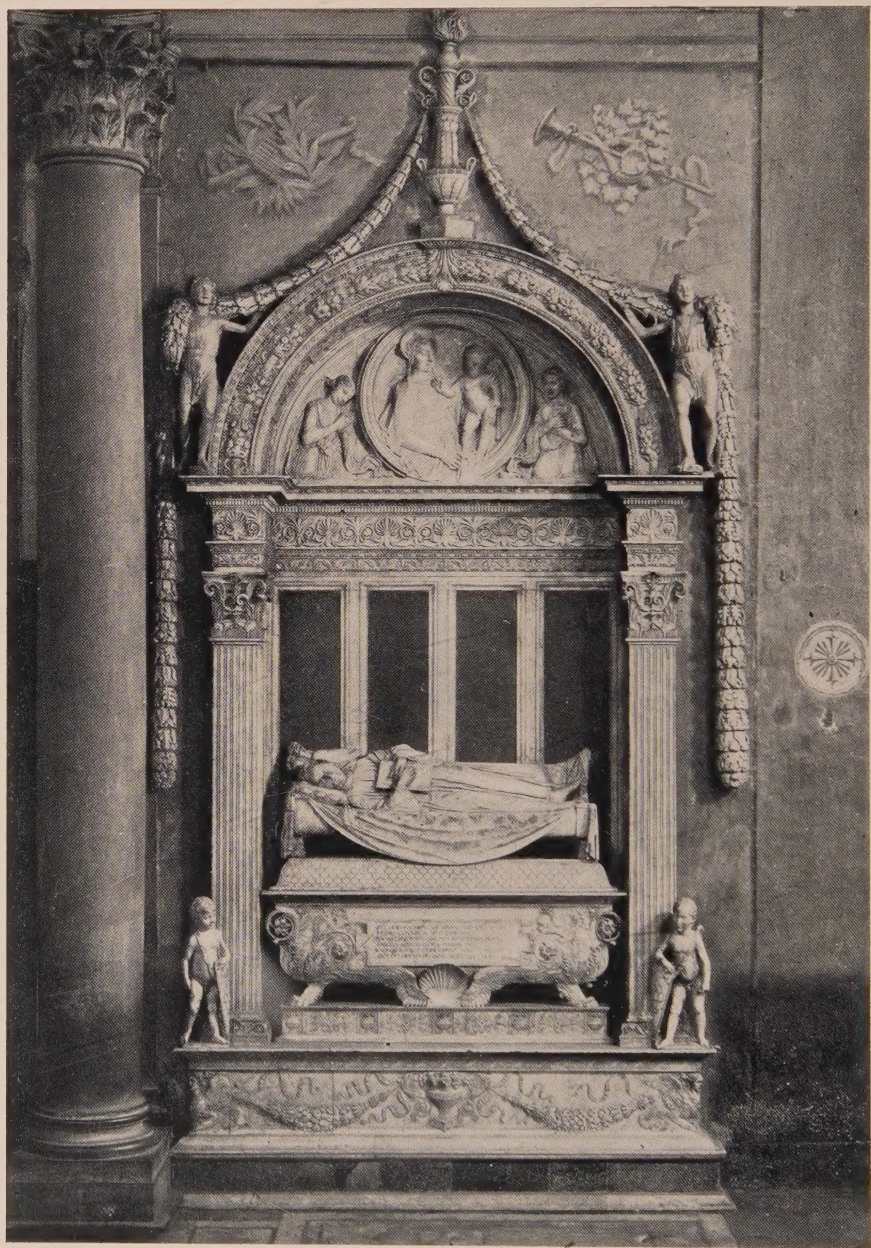


PLATE XXV      MARSUPPINI TOMB, FLORENCE, BY DESIDERIO DA SETTIGNANO, 1453